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Primary Source Analysis

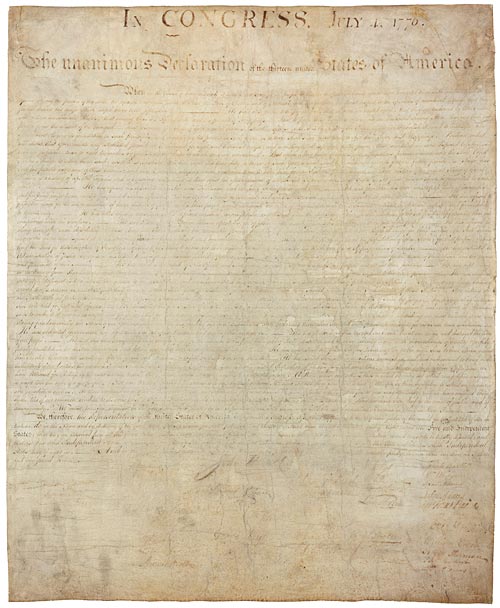
11 November 2015

**Primary Source Analysis: Teaching with Documents**

**Document:**

The Declaration of Independence (Written)

<http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc_large_image.php?flash=true&doc=2>



**Written Document Analysis Worksheet**

**1. TYPE OF DOCUMENT (Check one)**

Newspaper

Letter

Patent

Memorandum

Map

Telegram

Press release

Report

Advertisement

Congressional record

Census report

Other

**2. UNIQUE PHYSICAL QUALITIES OF THE DOCUMENT (Check one or more):**

Interesting letterhead

Handwritten

Typed

Seals

Notations

"RECEIVED" stamp

Other

**3. DATE(S) OF DOCUMENT:** 4 July 1776

**4. AUTHOR (OR CREATOR) OF THE DOCUMENT:** Thomas Jefferson

**POSITION (TITLE)**:

Committee member of the writers of the Declaration of Independence, and a member of Congress

**5. FOR WHAT AUDIENCE WAS THE DOCUMENT WRITTEN?**

The British monarchy and the powers that reigned over the American Republic and the Thirteen Colonies

**6. DOCUMENT INFORMATION**

1. List three things the author said that you think are important:

- “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

- “That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to affect their Safety and Happiness.”

- “And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.”

1. Why do you think this document was written?

This was written in an attempt to loose the bonds laid upon the American people by the British crown, and to establish the American colonies as an independent people.

1. What evidence in the document helps you know why it was written?

“That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to affect their Safety and Happiness.”

1. List two things the document tells you about life in the United States at the time it was written:
2. The American people were still subject to the rule of Great Britain.
3. The people of the colonies were willing to give their lives to defend the rights that were given to them by God, and to protect the lives and freedoms they had built for themselves and their families.
4. Write a question to the author that is left unanswered by the document:

Jefferson writes that the grievances of the British upon the people of the American Colonies were repeatedly brought up to authorities, but repeatedly ignored. However, were declarations such as this poised to the powers that were with an attempt to come to a compromise?

**Editorial Cartoon:**

*Another Bloody Nose for John Bull* (1813)- Commentary of the War of 1812 and the European naval losses to the American naval force.



**Visuals**

**Level One:**

1. List the objects or people you see in the cartoon.

* John Bull and a representation of the American naval force
* A bloody nose and black eyes on John Bull
* Naval Ships in the background
* Ocean
* Writing

**Level Two:**

1. Which of the objects on your list are symbols?

* The people in the cartoon
* The bloody nose and black eyes

1. What do you think each symbol means?

* The men in the cartoon represent the British and American Naval forces respectively.
* The bloody nose and black eyes represent the defeat of the British naval fleet at the hands of the Americans during the War of 1812.

**Words**

**Level One:**

1. Identify the cartoon caption and/or title.

*A Boxing Match* or *Another Bloody Nose for John Bull*

1. Locate three words or phrases used by the cartoonist to identify objects or people within the cartoon.

- John Bull

- Enterprising Nation

- Johnny vs. Jonathan

1. Record any important dates or numbers that appear in the cartoon.

NA

**Level Two:**

1. Which words or phrases in the cartoon appear to be the most significant? Why do you think so?

“Enterprising Nation”- This word is italicized and underlined, emphasizing the point that it is this quality that led to America’s victory.

“Two blows”- this phrase represents the number of battles fought between America and Britain before this cartoon was published; both were American victories.

1. List adjectives that describe the emotions portrayed in the cartoon.

* Enterprising Nation
* Equal Force
* Superior Skill
* Brother Jonathan

**Level Three:**

1. Describe the action taking place in the cartoon.

This cartoon is a visual representation of the American and British Naval forces. Both stand poised to fight as boxers; America stands tall and unharmed, Britain stooped and bloodied.

1. Explain how the words in the cartoon clarify the symbols.

The words express Britain begging “Brother” America for mercy, and expressing his acknowledgment of America’s superior skill and strength. Britain further explains that America has dealt “two blows to my one,” explaining the effect of America’s retaliation against British aggression.

1. Explain the message of the cartoon.

The cartoon is meant to be an encouragement to the American people at home that America is the superior force, and will always return triumphant. The cartoon is also a mockery of the British arrogance of the time, and the success of the American enterprise.

1. What special interest groups would agree/disagree with the cartoon's message? Why?

This message was intended for the American patriots, and against the British people of the time. The Americans and the British were in the midst of the War of 1812.